

THE MAIN REASONS OF DECLINING EDUCATIONAL STANDARDS AT SECONDARY LEVEL IN KARACHI, PAKISTAN

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INTRODUCTION

The education is becoming one of the defining enterprises of the 21st century with the emergence of globalization and increasing global competition. Dr. Pervaz Aslam (2005) describes that in the fast changing and competitive world, education and technology are the master keys for respectable survival and progress of Pakistan. Pakistan is determined to respond positively to emerging needs, opportunities and challenges of globalization. Education is being considered a key to change and progress. Progress and prosperity of the country depends on the kind of education that is provided to the people. This study was designed to explain and highlight the standards of education at secondary level in Karachi. Educational standards present criteria by which judgments can be made by state and local school personnel and communities, helping them to decide which curriculum, laws of administration, health program, staff development activity and assessment program is appropriate. Educational standards encourage policies that will bring coordination, consistency, and coherence to the improvement of the process of education. They allow everyone to move in the same direction, with the assurance that the risks they take in the name of improving education will be supported by policies and practices throughout the system. JavaScript (story print) (2004) evaluated that *Academic standards* describe what students should know and be able to do in the core academic subjects at each grade level. *Content standards* describe basic agreement about the body of

education knowledge that all students should know. *Performance standards* describe what level of performance is good enough for students to be described as advanced, proficient, below basic, or by some other performance level.

Usually educational standard stands for quality of education. Quality has been the goal of an eternal quest through the corridors of human history. It has been the divining force of all human endeavors. Concerning standard or quality of education the Marmar Mukhopadhyay (2005) clears that defining quality of education is a challenge since it deals with the most sensitive creation on earth, the human beings. Industrial products are finished goods, but education has no such finished product, nor even the graduates. Educational standards of Pakistan have been a burning issue among the educationalists since independence. Every member of the society has its own views concern the educational standards in Pakistan. Although every government tried its best to raise the standards of education but their efforts were mainly limited to preparing only educational policies in papers. We could not find practical implementation of their recommendations regarding standards of education in Pakistan. In the more vast sense a standard is any thing used to measure, for example a standard of conduct, a standard of weight or length. Actually a standard is a thing which has been used as a model to which objects or actions may be compared. The standard of education is defined in encyclopedia of education (1985) in the following sense:

“In the education context, then, standards should be regarded as objectives to be achieved or expectations of desirable attitude or levels of performance”

For more defining the standard of education, we actually have to provide the answers of some questions, like which types of aims regarding education are considered in the

current educational system? How these aims are set? To what extent these aims are achieved? How much these aims are related with the society? Which principles are considered while planning curriculum? Which teaching method can be suitable according to the age and psychological need of the child? By providing the answers of these questions we can describe the standards of education easily. The present education system of Pakistan has failed to disclose before the new generation the founding reasons of Pakistan. Musa khan Jalalzai (2005) stated that the disastrous results of this negligence are now evident in every walk of life. The responsibility for this deterioration lies with influential factions and those in power. The most alarming aspect besides ideological confusion and moral degradation is the falling standard of education. Due to constant decay Pakistan educational document are now no more acceptable abroad. Muhammad Naeem (2009) stated that currently, the government claims that Pakistan has a literacy rate of 47%. However, independent analysts and educational organizations put the actual figure at about 20% at secondary level. Most of the private schools serve as tuition centers to prepare students for board exams, rarely providing quality education and opportunities for intellectual growth. It is noteworthy to mention here that the GDP for education was 2.4 percent in the 1988, while despite claiming the sky high efforts by the government in the education zone; it just succeeded to touch the 2.9 percent of the GDP in the budget of 2007-08. This less attention of the government also declines the educational standards at secondary level. For analyzing the existing educational standards, the researchers collected the views of the students and teachers so that the main reasons of declining educational standards could come before us.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The objectives of the study were:

- To define the actual meaning of educational standards
- To analyze the views and opinion of students and teachers about the main reasons of declining educational standards at secondary level in Karachi
- To give suggestions and recommendation for improving the educational standards at secondary level.

METHODOLOGY OF THE STUDY

This study depended on quantitative research, based on survey. It is a comprehensive analysis of academic performance of 30 (15+15) government and private secondary schools. The purpose is to ascertain the overall performance of the government and private secondary schools regarding standard education provided by them.

The following factors noteworthy concerning the analysis.

- The geographical areas of study were 05 towns, selected from 18 towns of Karachi city.
- Within these geographical limits, Government and private Secondary Schools were included for collection of data and analysis.
- A total number of 30 schools were selected for study using the list of schools provided by the Board of Secondary Education Karachi.

- The views and opinions of 40 male and 40 female students while 10 male and 10 female teachers were sought.
- The sample consisted of 80 students and 20 teachers. The total numbers of respondents were one hundred.

RESEARCH INSTRUMENT

The researchers used a self constructed questionnaire, consisted of twenty five items. The information regarding this research study was collected through this questionnaire. The content validity of the instrument was certified by the experts (teachers of Jinnah University for women, Karachi). The research instrument was consisted of five parts containing some reasons which can be caused to decline educational standards at secondary level in Karachi. These were:

- 1) Defective administration
- 2) Inflexible curriculum
- 3) Ineffective evaluation system
- 4) Imperfect inspection system
- 5) Improper health facilities
- 6) Lack of co-curricular activities
- 7) Outdated teaching methods
- 8) Unavailability of scholarships

RESULTS

The collected data was converted into tables. Findings and conclusions were drawn in the light of these tables by the researchers.

Table 1

The ideas and views of government secondary schools male and female students regarding the main reasons of declining educational standards at secondary level in Karachi.

S.No	Description	Male (Agree)	Male (Disagree)	Female (Agree)	Female (Disagree)
1	Defective administration	70%	30%	90%	10%
2	Inflexible curriculum	80%	20%	80%	20%
3	Ineffective evaluation system	65%	35%	60%	40%
4	Imperfect inspection system	70%	30%	55%	45%
5	Improper health facilities	45%	55%	55%	45%
6	Lack of co-curricular activities	55%	45%	45%	55%
7	Outdated teaching methods	95%	05%	90%	10%
8	Unavailability of scholarships	45%	55%	30%	70%

Table 1: It shows that 70% male and 90% female students viewed that declining of educational standard is due to the defective administration system of schools. About 80% male and 80% female students opinioned that decline is just because of inflexible curriculum. Up to 65% male and 60% female students had the opinion that its cause is ineffective evaluation system. About 70% male and 55% female students defined that there is imperfect inspection system at secondary level. As high as 45% male and 55% female student stated that improper health facilities caused the deterioration of standards of education at secondary level in Karachi. As many as 55% male and 45% female students were of the view that lack of co-curricular activities in schools is responsible for this decline. Up to 95% male and 90% female students had the opinion that outdated teaching methods were the main reasons of low standard education. Whereas 45% male and 30% female students had the idea that unavailability of scholarships to needy and deserving students in schools actually caused the decline of educational standards at secondary level in Karachi.

Table 2

In table 2 Private secondary schools student's views about the causes of low standard education at secondary level in Karachi were highlighted.

S.No	Description	Male (Agree)	Male (Disagree)	Female (Agree)	Female (Disagree)
1	Defective administration	60%	40%	70%	30%
2	Inflexible curriculum	65%	35%	85%	15%
3	Ineffective evaluation system	75%	25%	70%	30%
4	Imperfect inspection system	65%	35%	90%	10%
5	Improper health facilities	40%	60%	50%	50%
6	Lack of co-curricular activities	30%	70%	45%	55%
7	Outdated teaching methods	95%	05%	95%	05%
8	Unavailability of scholarships	45%	55%	35%	65%

Table2: The calculation of table 2 shows that up to 60% male and 70% female students had the view that because of defective administration, educational standard decline day by day. As many as 65% male and 85% female students were of view that curriculum is not according to modern needs. About 75% male and 70% female students said that ineffective evaluation system is responsible for that. As high as 65% male and 90% female had the opinion that imperfect inspection system cause the declining educational standard. About 40% male and 50% female students said that improper health facilities destroy the standards. Up to 30% male and 45% female students stated that lack of co-curricular activities caused the deterioration of educational standard. As high as 95% male and 95% female students had the idea that inappropriate teaching methods is responsible in this regard, while 45% male and 35% female students said that lacking of scholarships at secondary level is the main reason of declining educational standard at secondary level.

Table 3

In table 3 the views of teachers belonging to government secondary schools about the main reasons of declining standard of education at secondary level in Karachi are stated.

S.No	Description	Male (Agree)	Male (Disagree)	Female (Agree)	Female (Disagree)
1	Defective administration	60%	40%	40%	60%
2	Inflexible curriculum	80%	20%	80%	20%
3	Ineffective evaluation system	60%	40%	40%	60%
4	Imperfect inspection system	80%	20%	60%	40%
5	Improper health facilities	40%	60%	60%	40%
6	Lack of co-curricular activities	40%	60%	40%	60%
7	Outdated teaching methods	60%	40%	60%	40%
8	Unavailability of scholarships	40%	60%	20%	80%

Table 3: The numerical analysis of table 3 highlights that about 60% male and 40% female teachers were of the view that maladministration is the main cause of low standard education. Up to 80% male and 80% female teachers had the idea that curriculum is not flexible. About 60% male and 40% female teachers said that evaluation system is not proper that is why the standard of education decreases. As high as 80% male and 60% female had the view that imperfect inspection system is declining the standards. As many as 40% male and 60% female teachers stated that the schools are providing improper health facilities. About 40% male and 40% female teachers had the idea that lacking of co-curricular activities is responsible for low standard. Up to 60% male and 60% female teachers stated that non-psychological teaching methods destroy standard of education, whereas 40% male and 20% female teachers had the idea that unavailability of scholarships has decline the educational standards at secondary level in Karachi.

Table 4

Private secondary schools teachers' views and opinions regarding the reasons of declining educational standards at secondary level in Karachi.

S.No	Description	Male (Agree)	Male (Disagree)	Female (Agree)	Female (Disagree)
1	Defective administration	60%	40%	60%	40%
2	Inflexible curriculum	80%	20%	80%	20%
3	Ineffective evaluation system	60%	40%	60%	40%
4	Imperfect inspection system	60%	40%	70%	30%
5	Improper health facilities	60%	40%	60%	40%
6	Lack of co-curricular activities	80%	20%	60%	40%
7	Outdated teaching methods	60%	40%	60%	40%
8	Unavailability of scholarships	20%	80%	40%	60%

Table 4: The above table shows that 60% male and 60% female teachers were of view that defective administration is one the big cause of low standard education. About 80% male and 80% female teachers said that non modernization of curriculum is responsible for declining standard. Up to 60% male and 60% female teachers had the idea that evaluation is not properly conducted. As high as 60% male and 70% female teaches stated that inspection of schools did not held effectively. Up to 60% male and 60% female teachers opined that lacking of health facilities is the main reason of declining educational standards. As many as 80% male and 60% female teachers had the idea that lack of co-curricular activities in schools is the cause of law standards. About 60% male and 60% female teachers viewed that the teachers are not adopting modern teaching methods, while 20% male and 40% female teachers stated that unavailability of scholarships actually declining the educational standards at secondary level in Karachi.

DISCUSSION

Education is a powerful tool and fundamental force in the life of man. Deepak (2006) stated that education plays an instructional role in shaping the destiny of the individual

and the future of mankind. SEAMEO-Jasper Research Award (2009) further clears that education provides opportunities to acquire knowledge and competencies to function in a global environment. The goal of building a cohesive, equitable and harmonious community, bound together in solidarity for deeper understanding and cooperation, presents new challenges for scholars and education practitioners in acquiring new concepts and innovative models for effective teaching and learning. The standard of education is direct consequence and outcome of the quality of teachers and teaching methods used by them. Society believes that competent, effective teachers are important keys to a strong system of education. Accordingly, teachers are expected to be proficient in the use of instructional technologies and class room management techniques. They are also expected to have a thorough understanding of the developmental levels of their students and a social group of the content they teach. To maintain and extend this high level of skills, teachers are expected to be informed of exemplary practices and to demonstrate a device for professional development. Teacher competency and effectiveness includes the responsibility to help all learners succeed. Regarding standards Seth Spaulding (1970) stated that we have provided more and more money to more and more of that we may be doing poorly. We hope that we could do it better. Educationists of international distinction have suggested that it will be possible only by developing suitable curriculum and applying educational technologies to make the curriculum more effective and the school more efficient. Chodavarapu Jalala (2004) said that on the basis of broad objectives, curriculum planning should be done and suitable subject content, behavioral outcomes and other learning experiences be put in for making curriculum comprehensive. It should be based on the findings of curriculum research and be enriched by interdisciplinary collaboration among experts on different subjects. All this would contribute to the design of a total school curriculum that is complementary as well as comprehensive. In Pakistan quality education has marked a clear line of discrimination on financial grounds, and more considerably, it is beyond the reach of many students. Muhammad Naeem (2009) declared that the saddening and deteriorating condition of educational system in the country raises many fingers on education department, whose representatives, so confidently, sing songs of success in every of their appearance. There is no accountability of the typical landlord culture, which is going on in majority of the country's institutions. If government aims to reach the sky of standard education and to provide it at doorstep of every Pakistani, it should keep its eyes open, as the written records and work in progress in the buildings named schools, are not in any convincing or assimilating position. Especially for the improvement of standard at secondary level education sufficient steps should be taken, because secondary education is connecting link between primary and high education as D.S Srivastara (2005) stated that secondary education is often considered as the most important segment of the individual learning.

According to Ground Water, Brennan McFadden (2003) Secondary school is a place where much complex interaction takes place that has a significant impact on the identity formation of young people and the consequent success in adult life. Education is the basic right of every individual in the society but unfortunately, educational standards in Pakistan are declining fastly. One of the most important factors in standards of education is good evaluation system. Evaluation plays a great role in the achievements and learning of individual. Especially it can be helpful for teachers to analyze as J.P Lal (2005) stated that evaluation help the teachers to improve his classroom procedures and methods of teaching in the light of feed back. Unfortunately in Pakistan imperfect evaluation system also devalue the standards of education in schools.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- The curriculum of secondary level should be improved according to the needs of time and wishes of the society.
- Introduce high quality selection procedure for secondary level teachers and offer the candidates better incentives.
- The administration of school should be effective and efficient. It should keep democratic approach.
- The evaluation system at secondary level should be organized and modern techniques must be used to evaluate the abilities of a child.
- There should not be political interference in educational institutions.
- All secondary government and private schools should be allocated with proper health facilities (neat and clean and according to the health principles food & availability of doctor or a nurse in the schools).
- The only trained teachers should be appointed in schools.
- The secondary school teachers should use modern teaching methods according to the age and psychological requirements of students.
- There should be opportunities provided to the students for participating in different co-curricular activities.
- The process of inspection should be done in proper and democratic way and the concept of favors should be out of this process.
- The scholarships should be provided to deserving and intelligent students at secondary level in schools.
- Various teams of experts should be involved in performing the above mentioned task of improvement and formation.

CONCLUSION

After analyzing the results it can be easily concluded that ineffective administration, non flexible curriculum and outdated teaching methods used by teachers are the main reasons of declining educational standards at secondary level. We may say that to some extent the imperfect evaluation system and bad inspection involved in this deterioration. Improper health facilities, political interference, lacking of co-curricular activities, non availability of scholarships are also some of the factors which destroy standards of education at secondary level in Karachi.

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LIST OF SCHOOLS FROM WHICH DATA HAS BEEN COLLECTED BY THE RESEARCHERS FOR RESEARCH PAPER

S.No	TOWNS	GOVERNMENT SCHOOLS	PRIVATE SCHOOLS
1	North Nazimabad Town	1) GBSS Aleemia Block A North Nazimabad	1) Maryam Public School R-43, 44 North Nazimabad
		2) GGSS National North Nazimabad	2) S.M Public School Block J North Nazimabad
		3) GGSS Farhana (E.M) North Nazimabad	3) King Edward Sec School B-259 Block N North Nazimabad.
2	Liaquatabad Town	1) GBSS Federal English No.1 Pir Colony	1)Fair Field High School Block 1/C, 6/4 Nazimabad
		2) GBSS Happy Dale Nazimabad	2)Modern Public Sec SchoolV-E-18, Nazimabad
		3) GGSS Nazimabad No 4	3)Shaheen Sec School Nazimabad No. 1
3	Gulburg Town	1) GBHSS Allama Iqbal F.B Area	1)Erum Sec School R-43, Block-14, F.B Area
		2) GGSS Aziz National	2)Khalid Sec School R-525, Block-14, F.B Area
		3) GGSS Dastagir Block 9	3)Sun Oxford School C-37, Block-4, F.B Area
4	New Karachi Town	1) GBSS 11/F New Karachi	1)Candle Light Sec School Sector 5/F, New Karachi
		2) GBSS 5/B New Karachi	2)Super Sec School 1211-11-E, North Karachi
		3) GGSS 5/G New Karachi	3)Dawn Sec School 11-D, North Karachi
5	S.I.T.E Town	1) GBSS Al-Ghazali Rexer Line	1) Shaheen Progressive School A-39, Block-4, Site
		2) GGSS Metroville SITE Frontier	2)Standard Sec School F-71, Block-4, Site
		3) GGSS Qasba Colony	3) Fountain English School B-135, Block-2 Site

QUESTIONNAIRE FOR TEACHERS & STUDENTS

Dear Respondent,

This questionnaire is designed for collection of data for the research paper. It is given to you to find out your views regarding “The main reasons of declining educational standards at secondary level in Karachi”. You can contribute to this research study by answering all questions. You have to mark (√) in the concerned blank. The information will be kept confidential and used for research purpose only.

Thanks for your co-operation.

Researchers,
Prof. Dr. Farida Azeem Lodhi & Ms. Waqar-un-Nisa Faizi
Jinnah University for Women

PARTICULARS

NAME _____ GENDER _____

CLASS _____ SCHOOL NAME _____

QUESTIONNAIRE FOR STUDENTS

S.No	Questions	Agree	Disagree
1	Your school provides the education of high standard.		
2	Your school has a good administration.		
3	Your school administration looks after all the important matters of school.		
4	There is a parents and teachers association in your school for observing students problems.		
5	Your administrator uses modern techniques for organizing the important issues of school.		
6	The maladministration in secondary schools is the main cause of deteriorating educational standards at secondary level.		
7	The curriculum of secondary level in your school is according to the modern needs.		
8	You observed inflexibility in the curriculum of secondary level.		
9	Your teacher completes your syllabus within given time.		
10	You are achieving computer education as compulsory subject.		
11	Your school is providing complete health facilities to the students.		
12	Your school has appointed a doctor or a nurse regarding first aid.		
13	Your school is providing the facility of cafeteria to the students.		
14	The food provided in cafeteria is neat and clean and according to the health principles.		
15	There is a playground in your school.		
16	The school is providing to you the facility of indoor and outdoor games.		
17	The lack of co-curricular activities is a big reason of low standard education in schools.		
18	Your school invites the other schools for participation in co-curricular activities in order to provide social training to students.		
19	The outmoded teaching methods are used by teachers at secondary level.		
20	Your teacher uses the audio-visual aids during teaching.		
21	Your teacher uses the new and modern methods of evaluation in school.		
22	Your teacher checks the achievements of students during the class.		
23	Your teacher is using the diagnostic evolutionary method to know the problems of students.		
24	The bad inspection system at secondary level exploits the standards of education.		
25	The unavailability of scholarships to the needy and intelligent students destroys quality of education.		

PARTICULARS

NAME _____ GENDER _____

TEACHING EXPERIENCE _____ SCHOOL NAME _____

QUESTIONNAIRE FOR TEACHERS

S.No	Questions	Agree	Disagree
1	Your school provides the education of high standard.		
2	Your school has a good administration.		
3	Your school administration looks after all the important matters of school.		
4	There is a parents and teachers association in your school for observing students problems.		
5	Your administrator uses modern techniques for organizing the important issues of school.		
6	The maladministration in secondary schools is the main cause of deteriorating educational standards at secondary level.		
7	The curriculum of secondary level in your school is according to the modern needs.		
8	You observed inflexibility in the curriculum of secondary level.		
9	You complete your syllabus within given time.		
10	You are providing computer education as compulsory subject.		
11	Your school is providing complete health facilities to the students.		
12	Your school has appointed a doctor or a nurse regarding first aid.		
13	Your school is providing the facility of cafeteria to the students.		
14	The food provided in cafeteria is neat and clean and according to the health principles.		
15	There is a playground in your school.		
16	You are providing the facility of indoor and outdoor games to the students.		
17	The lack of co-curricular activities is a big reason of low standard education in schools.		
18	Your school invites the other schools for participation in co-curricular activities in order to provide social training to your students.		
19	The outmoded teaching methods are used by teachers at secondary level.		
20	You use the audio-visual aids during teaching.		
21	You use the new and modern methods of evaluation in school.		
22	You check the achievements of students during the class.		
23	You are using the diagnostic evolutionary method to know the problems of students.		
24	The bad inspection system at secondary level exploits the standards of education.		
25	The unavailability of scholarships to the needy and intelligent students destroys quality of education.		